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ABSTRACT

To identify, categorize, and compare inservice preferences of educators, these researchers administered the Teacher In-Service Preference Questionnaire to 440 instructors in the Northwest and interviewed 26 of the respondents. Findings indicated that the kind of inservice most preferred was the workshop, with conventions and professional conferences least preferred. The professional development committee was most preferred as an organization responsible for planning, providing resource personnel, and evaluating professionalism. The first preference for budgeting for developmental activities was the governing board. When social categories were considered as predictors of inservice preferences, significant differences were obtained. Both sex and years of experience were found to be significantly related to preferences for inservice education. Differences exist on the motivation dimension of a theoretical model for the categories of incentives, aspirations, expectations, and satisfactions. The sample ranked the expectations category first, incentives second, aspirations third, and satisfactions fourth as factors associated with successful inservice programs. (Author/JM)

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INSERVICE EDUCATION PREFERENCES OF EDUCATORS

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EA 012 181

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ABSTRACT

In-service Education Preferences of Educators

To identify, categorize, and compare in-service preferences of educators, a Teacher In-service Preference Questionnaire, supplemented by the patterned interview, provided the data used to gather data.

The findings indicated that workshops was ranked first as the in-service activity most preferred with conventions and professional conferences least preferred. The professional development committee was the most preferred as an organization responsible for planning, providing resource personnel, and evaluating professionalism. Governing boards was the first preference for budgeting for developmental activities.

When social categories were considered as predictors of in-service preferences, significant differences were obtained.

The sample exhibited definite preferences for certain practices and procedures of in-service education. Evidence suggested that there are clusters of practices and procedures that play a significant role in determining preference for developing professionalism through in-service activities.

Differences exist on the motivation dimension of a theoretical model for the categories incentives, aspirations, expectations, and satisfactions. The sample ranked the expectations category first, incentives second, aspirations third, and satisfactions fourth as factors associated with successful in-service programs.

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INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Statement

The importance of in-service education for all educational personnel is recognized throughout the literature: in articles, in textbooks, in special publications, and in research studies. A rapidly changing culture, the knowledge explosion, and an increase in the knowledge of the learning process make it necessary for educators to keep abreast. Without planned programs for upgrading teaching skills, higher educational staff members who have not kept informed on new strategies and techniques will remain isolated on an educational island remote from innovative practices.

In-service sessions, however, usually generate hostility and resentment rather than foster change. "Teachers often do not go back to the classroom stimulated or inspired to do something new."[1] Some go back feeling uneasy and defensive, clinging even harder to their existing techniques with which they feel comfortable and which they now feel a need to defend.

Past Research

Institutes, workshops, and government-supported programs have been reported in the literature. Westin and Smith[2] have described in detail the work at the Center for Research and Education in American

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[1]William C. Miller, "To Change or Not to Change--Is There Any Question?" Educational Leadership, 31:488, March, 1974.

[2]A. F. Westin and Raymond E. Smith, "Learning to Teach About Liberty: An Institute Model for the 1970's," Social Education, 32:355-61, April, 1968.

Liberties, which was created as a joint project of Columbia University and Teachers College. Among the many activities of the center was the development of an institute model designed to improve the teaching about liberty. Ellsworth and Allen[3] described a two-week summer program for instructional staff held annually in Detroit, Michigan.

A particularly exciting project begun under the Experienced Teacher Fellowship program was the establishment of Chicago's Center for Inner City Studies, a branch of Northeastern Illinois State College.[4] Working together in the center are creative faculty and students determined to exemplify how community and university can work together to remake inner city education. Students who have received special instruction in research have produced original studies in communication, local history, and programmed instruction. Inner city problems and minority cultures receive special emphasis. One of the major goals is to "help participants put their stereotypes, fears, and prejudices against minorities in better balance with the realities of human differences and similarities."[5]

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This paper relates to a study done by a descriptive survey of a selected sample of instructors in the Northwest. The purpose of the study was to identify, categorize, and compare in-service education preferences.

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[3]Ruth Ellsworth and Arthur T. Allen, "Teachers Study the Social Education of Urban Children," The Elementary School Journal, 64:420-26, May, 1964.

[4]Sonja H. Stone, "Chicago's Center for Inner City Studies: An Experiment in Relevance," Social Education, 33:528-32, May, 1969.

[5]Ibid., p. 531.

The Teacher In-service Preference Questionnaire

The TIPQ consists of thirty-four Likert-type items designed to measure in-service preferences of teachers and administrators. The Teacher In-service Preference Questionnaire was subjected to a test-retest pilot study for purposes of item revision, clarification, and instrument validation. From the test-retest pilot study procedure it was established that the Teacher In-service Preference Questionnaire's reliability coefficient is .91 with a potential maximum validity of .95. According to Garrett,[6] this is an acceptable index of discrimination for research, considering that a reliability coefficient of .85 to .99 is the range most authors recommend for commercial intelligence and educational achievement tests.

Additional statistical analysis on the instrument revealed a Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient for each of the subtests or categories. The categories aspirations (.83), expectations (.82), and satisfactions (.76) all showed a high Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient suggesting the instrument has a good level of consistency.

To ensure further validity of the mailed questionnaires, twenty-six respondents were interviewed during the month of February, 1975 while attending an in-service activity at a teachers' convention. For this planned interview technique, the interviewer outlined, in advance, a set of carefully worded questions from the questionnaire and a sequence in which these questions were to be asked. Siegel recommends this technique because it "...directs the interviewer's attention to

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[6]Henry E. Garrett, Statistics in Psychology and Education (New York, David McKay Co., 1965), pp. 337-370.

critical factors to be considered in making his judgment, thereby reducing the effects of personal bias and halo effect."[7]

Types of In-service Activities Preferred

One of the questions of the study dealt with identifying the types of in-service activities most preferred by the sample and comparing the responses when grouped into social categories.

Total sample. When rank ordered on the basis of percentage selection of the total sample of 440 educators, workshops ranked highest as the in-service activity most preferred, demonstrations ranked as the second most preferred, seminars ranked third, institutes fourth, conferences fifth, and conventions as the least preferred as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

In-service Activity Most Preferred by Total Sample Participants

In-service Activity	Percentage Selections 1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Rank Order
Workshops	42.73	28.86	12.05	6.59	5.91	3.86	1
Demonstrations	20.23	20.23	15.23	15.06	11.14	17.50	2
Seminars	10.45	20.23	29.32	16.36	16.36	7.05	3
Institutes	12.50	18.18	20.68	25.45	12.50	10.00	4
Conference	6.59	5.45	12.73	20.45	28.41	26.14	5
Conventions	7.73	8.18	9.32	16.14	23.40	35.00	6

[7]Laurence Siegel and Irving M. Lane, Psychology and Education (New York: David McKay Co., 1965), pp. 337-370.

When combined, over 71 percent of the sample selected workshops as their first and second most preferred in-service activity and 58.4 percent selected conventions as the fifth and least preferred type of in-service activity. These findings were consistent with the following comment by a sample representative:

> I feel more release time to attend in-service training--workshops, seminars, etc. would be much more beneficial to instructors than conventions are.

Social categories as predictors of types of in-service activities preferred. When years of experience as an instructor is considered as a predictor of types of in-service activity preferences, does a difference exist? Using a chi square, for the most preferred in-service activity, a significant difference was found to exist as shown in Table 2. The chi square value for this category was 18.858 with five degrees of freedom making it significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table 2

Chi Square Value of the In-service Activity Most Preferred and Years of Experience as an Instructor

Years of Experience		In-service Activity Preference: Conference	Institute	Seminar	Convention	Workshop	Demonstration	Total
0 - 4 yrs	fo	3	6	11	5	46	23	94
	fe	4.36	13.07	10.65	8.23	41.16	15.50	
20 or more	fo	6	21	11	12	39	9	98
	fe	4.64	13.93	11.35	8.77	43.84	16.51	
Total		9	27	22	17	85	32	192

X^2 should be 15.086 with 5 degrees of freedom to be significant at the .01 level. $X^2 = 18.858$

For this sample, then, years of experience (0 - 4 years and 20 or more years) can be considered a significant predictor in determining in-service activity preference.

Similarly, a significant relationship exists between years of experience as an instructor and the least preferred in-service activity. The beginning instructor selected conferences as the least preferred in-service activity whereas the more experienced instructor preferred demonstrations.

When sex is considered as a predictor of types of in-service activities preferred, does a significant relationship exist? Table 3 shows that there is a significant relationship between the sex of the sample respondents and the most preferred in-service activity. The relationship is significant at the .05 level of confidence with a chi square value of 11.784 with five degrees of freedom.

Table 3

Chi Square Value of the In-service Activity Most Preferred and the Sample When Grouped on the Basis of Sex

		In-service Activity Preference						
Sex		Con-ference	Insti-tute	Seminar	Convention	Work-shop	Demon-stration	Total
Male	fo	23	24	26	19	97	42	231
	fe	15.26	28.94	23.68	17.89	98.40	46.83	
Female	fo	6	31	19	15	90	47	208
	fe	13.74	26.06	21.32	16.11	88.60	42.17	
Total		29	55	45	34	187	89	439

X^2 should be 11.070 with 5 degrees of freedom to be significant at the .05 level. $X^2 = 11.7842$

Males tend to prefer conferences and seminars whereas females favor institutes. As a least preferred in-service activity, males demonstrated a least preference for demonstrations and females for conferences. The difference was significant at the .01 level.

It can be said, then, that a significant or highly significant relationship exists when sex of the respondent is considered in determining in-service activity preference.

When considering the most preferred in-service activity, a chi square statistic showed that a significant relationship existed in the following categories:

1. years of experience (.01 level of confidence) and
2. sex (.05 level of confidence).

These differences are, in part, explained by the following statement made by a sample representative:

> Because I have only been teaching for four years, my knowledge of in-service education is minimal. However, from my experience, if an instructor only gets "one new idea" the in-service was worthwhile. It is very difficult to please the majority of instructors at in-service programs because each person is looking for something different.

Areas of Responsibility and Preferred Organizations

For purposes of this study, a research question that would identify and compare in-service education areas of responsibilities and preferred organizations was formulated. Stated another way, the question asks if respondents prefer specific organizations to assume the main responsibility for the tasks of planning, providing guest speakers, evaluating, and budgeting for in-service programs.

For the total sample, the professional development committee was selected as the organization that should have the main responsibility in planning, providing resource personnel, and evaluating in-service programs. Governing boards were selected as the organization that should have the main responsibility in budgeting for in-service programs.

The professional development committee was ranked first by 66.36 percent of the entire sample as being the preferred organization mainly responsible for planning in-service education programs.

Of the total sample, 55.91 percent identified governing boards as the main organization that should be responsible for budgeting for in-service programs.

Qualitative data from the study offer additional support to these findings:

> I believe that an ongoing, regular program of in-service work, in conjunction with conventions, specialist councils, and the like should be made a condition of employment and should be fully funded. In addition, opportunity should be provided for the instructor to travel further afield in an attempt to broaden one's scope. By allowing financial recovery for expenses for such things as travel, etc. and more time for in-service, we feel that the governing board is thereby demonstrating recognition of time well spent by the instructor and positively reinforcing the desire of educators to improve themselves.

The sample preferred that the professional development committee be responsible for providing recognized speakers and resource personnel. The professional development committee was ranked first by 45.91 percent of the total sample. Perhaps there is some merit to the following comment made by a sample representative:

> The resource personnel for in-service should be people with recognized classroom expertise and not those who have attempted to escape the classroom.

In this study, the sample was asked to indicate the organization that should be responsible for evaluating in-service program effectiveness. About 72.73 percent of the respondents ranked the professional development committee first for this task.

Motivating Practices and Procedures of In-service Education

Another purpose of the study was to identify and categorize in-service preferences of the sample pertaining to a number of practices and procedures. The assumption was that the perception of the respondents would represent useful evidence since it would be based on direct, personal experiences and observations. Comments obtained during the study were used to corroborate data related to the items under investigation.

Table 4

Items Rank Ordered by the Total Sample on the Basis of Product Summed Means

Item Number		Rank Order	Mean $\bar{X}$
A	In-service programs should include special orientation activities for the new instructor	1	+1.489
B	The primary purpose of in-service education is to improve upon the instructional process.	2	+1.358
C	In-service programs should include more activities which allow for the different interests among individual instructors.	3	+1.310
D	One of the most motivating in-service activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.	4	+1.216
E	Instructors need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for in-service programs.	5	+1.163

Item A. In-service programs should include special orientation activities for the new instructor.

Item A, concerned with including special orientation activities for the new instructor, received a mean of +1.489 and was ranked first. This suggests that highest priority was given to including special orientation activities for the new instructor.

Item B. The primary purpose of in-service education is to improve upon the instructional process.

Educators, when asked about the purpose of in-service education, agreed strongly that it should be to improve upon the instructional process. Item B was ranked second with a mean of +1.358. One sample representative commented on this topic in this way:

> All in-service programs should be oriented toward better classroom teaching and should arise from a felt need among the instructors concerned. To be of maximum value, they should be initiated early in the year.

Item C. In-service programs should include more activities which allow for the different interests among individual instructors.

Item C, which dealt with in-service programs including more activities which allow for different interests among individuals, was ranked third with a mean of +1.310. Those in charge of planning in-service activities may be interested in this preference.

Item D. One of the most motivating in-service activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.

Respondents in this study agreed strongly that one of the motivating factors to attend in-service activities lies in the opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs. They ranked this item fourth in importance with a mean of +1.216. This finding could be interpreted to mean that most instructors are constantly searching for instructional techniques and innovative programs designed to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The same thought is expressed in these comments by a sample respondent:

> Most instructors wish in-service to directly affect classroom instruction. I feel that inspiration and motivation is more important, particularly if it leads to teacher developed innovations and instruction.

Item E. Instructors need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for in-service programs.

Item E was ranked fifth with a mean of +1.163. This finding indicates a strong desire for involvement, particularly in the planning, developing, and evaluating or in-service programs. It may be said that with involvement often comes commitment, a strong motivating factor.

Motivation Dimension of In-service Programs

For further analysis, the items were grouped into categories of motivation entitled incentives, aspirations, expectations, and satisfactions. Turner[8] provided the concept of in-service education in the form of a model (Figure 1, p. 12). The categories used in the model provide a basis

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[8]Unruh Turner, Supervision for Change and Innovation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970), pp. 95-125.

DIMENSION ONE

Periods of Professional Growth

DIMENSION TWO

Areas of Knowledge

DIMENSION THREE

Motivation

Areas of Knowledge	Pre-service	Initial Teaching Period	Building Security	The Maturing Teacher
Culture (continuing general education) Specialization Professional Advancement		1* (a) (b)	6* (a) (b)	11* (a) (b)
Sociology		2* (a) (b)	7* (a) (b)	12* (a) (b)
Psychology		3* (a) (b)	8* (a) (b)	13* (a) (b)
Methodology		4* (a) (b)	9* (a) (b)	14* (a) (b)
Philosophy		5* (a) (b)	10* (a) (b)	15* (a) (b)

Incentives

Aspirations

Expectations

Satisfactions

*Each of the fifteen cells may be filled with (a) independent studies and (b) group work. A large number of activities and projects can thus be generated.

FIGURE 1

A MODEL FOR A PROGRAM OF IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

for planning, researching, and evaluating professional programs. This conceptualization contains three dimensions: (a) periods of professional growth, (b) areas of knowledge, and (c) a motivation dimension. This study focused primarily on the motivation dimension.

Table 5

Classification Means of the Total Sample

Classification	Category Mean $\bar{X}$	Rank Order
Expectations	+1.070	1
Incentives	+ .810	2
Aspirations	+ .540	3
Satisfactions	- .059	4

Expectations category. According to the sample, the classification entitled expectations of in-service education was ranked first with a category mean of +1.070. It might be said that the category expectations for in-service may be the most important aspect of the motivation dimension in Turner's model. This finding may provide useful guidelines for those in charge of planning in-service programs.

Incentives category. Having a category mean of +.810, the incentives category was ranked second as a motivating factor when considering in-service programs. Motivators, as reflected by the statements in the incentives category, appear to be: salary while attending in-service programs, release time, and involvement in developing purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for in-service programs. This evidence may be useful to those involved in assessing the factors that contribute to successful in-service programs.

Aspirations category. As a motivator, the aspirations category was ranked third with a category mean of +.540. Items in this category reflected such practices as: more opportunity to attend non-local in-service programs, more opportunity to become involved as guest speakers, and the scheduling of in-service activities during class time. The evidence concerning the aspirations category may be useful in determining future directions for in-service education.

Satisfactions category. The satisfactions category, with a mean of +.059, was ranked fourth in the motivational dimension. Items in this section dealt with such in-service preferences as: increasing motivation by providing a greater opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs, the ability to use the results of in-service training in the classroom, providing more follow-up to in-service activities, and having well planned in-service programs. Factors such as those stated appear to affect the satisfactions associated with in-service activities.

It could be concluded, on the basis of evidence presented in this paper, that the motivating dimension of a model is an important indicator of factors associated with successful in-service programs. This finding may lead to further studies concerning the motivating factors pertinent to in-service programs.

CONCLUSIONS

From statistical evidence presented in this paper and subject to the assumptions and limitations set out prior to investigation, the following conclusions may be made:

1. Instructors prefer workshops most and conventions least when expressing an in-service preference.

2. There are some significant differences in preferences toward in-service activities when social categories are considered as predictors, particularly in the categories sex and years of experience.

3. Educators selected professional development committees as first choice as the organization responsible for planning, providing resource personnel, and evaluating in-service programs.

4. Boards were the organization most preferred to be responsible for budgeting for in-service programs.

5. The sample exhibited definite preferences for certain practices and procedures pertaining to in-service education.

6. Differences exist on the motivation dimension or a theoretical model for the categories incentives, aspirations, expectations, and satisfactions.

IMPLICATIONS

Evidence in the study, on the basis of percentage selections, product summed means, rank order, and the chi square statistic, suggests the following implications:

1. The improvement of the instructional process must become a routine aspect of the educator's professional life. Educators must be given the preferred in-service activities, time, and resources with which to assess their professional needs and to carry on improvement activities.

2. Instructors must participate in the governance of their own professional growth. In-service programs that provide for in-put and

participation, from the planning to the evaluating phase, are desirable.

3. Effective teaching is often characterized by the ability to make rational choices through which means are adapted to ends. In-service programs, in curriculum, should increase the number of instructional options.

4. A mechanism for the long-range planning and coordinating of the professional development program of a school system is needed. The process should involve the various professional role groups that will be affected by the program.

5. Professional growth and systematic research on professional growth can aid each other. It is desirable that in-service programs begin to exploit the potential available from research and literature.

6. The management of programs of professional growth is a highly specialized aspect of personnel administration. Educators may be advised to create and legitimize a role for specialists concerned exclusively with the improvement of teaching.

7. An interest in excellence in teaching does not occur as a matter of course, and even when it exists, it may be dissipated by constraints or lack of motivation. In-service activities should make greater use of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives to motivate participants.

If the foregoing has merit, one does not have to look far to discover what must be done. In-service education must begin with perception, kindle the freedom and the lust to change, then provide a method and support, and end in the confirmation of newborn habits. It should be cautioned that the chief rewards may come in the shape of intrinsic satisfaction, that success is not inevitable and the goal not permanent, that change is never free from stress, that skills enlarge with practice and atrophy with neglect.